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THE SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

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With the increase in enrolment and in complexity of organization of the high school has come the evolution of the principal from a teacher among teachers to an office manager. Until recently the average principal taught almost as many hours as any other member of the staff and, in addition, performed at odd times such managerial duties as were considered necessary to justify the larger salary which he received. In some of the smaller schools this is still the case. But in most schools he is now relieved of at least a part of his teaching, and in the larger schools and many of medium size he does no teaching at all.

In exchanging the straight chair of the classroom for the swivel chair of the office, the principal has found himself a busy man of affairs. A study of the schedules of representative principals indicates that, generally speaking, the principal is not only a busy but a confused man in the midst of administrative details which clamor for attention but which in the aggregate are quite too numerous to receive his personal attention. To indicate the extent to which this is true the following quantitative facts are given from reports made by the high-school principals of a large city as to the amount of time devoted to routine duties each day. The maximum time given by any principal was reported as follows: excusing absences and tardiness, twenty minutes; discipline, sixty minutes; interviews with pupils (not disciplinary), sixty minutes; interviews with parents, forty-five minutes; interviews with teachers (not regarding methods of teaching), 120 minutes; correspondence, 120 minutes; showing visitors about the school, 120 minutes. In addition to these items of daily routine, one principal reported a total of 264 hours spent each year in schedule-making and classification of pupils.

It is obvious that if the principal is to be a professional leader instead of a school mechanic he must do some clear thinking

about the aims of education and the relative importance of the activities necessary to secure these aims. Obviously, some of the tasks absorbing his time could be done better by a clerk; perhaps some do not need to be done at all or could be accomplished in less time by more efficient methods, while many could be delegated to other members of the staff with a gain to group and individual morale.

Were it not that ordinary school management indicates little recognition of the fact, it would seem unnecessary to say that instruction is the most important activity taking place in the school. In short, it is for the sake of instruction, broadly conceived, that the entire machinery of the school is set up and the expense of education is incurred by the state. It is apparent, then, that the improvement of instruction is the most important aim which the principal should have in mind in arranging the schedule of his activities.

Until recently there has been slight recognition of the function of the principal as the supervisor charged with the responsibility of improving instruction, either on the part of principals themselves or on the part of boards of education. Principals have been selected because of their social and executive qualifications and have naturally developed in the direction of routine efficiency in dealing with the personal problems of the position as commonly conceived. Such knowledge as the principal has had of what goes on in the classrooms has been secured through office gossip with pupils, parents, or teachers, or by glass-door or keyhole observation as he has hurried through the halls on the lookout for chance or anticipated disorder. In many schools teachers do not expect or understand the meaning of classroom visitation by the principal. The head of a large high school told the writer that if he were to spend an hour in a classroom, the teacher would suspect that something was wrong, and the pupils would be sure of it.

Besides a recognition of its supreme importance, an effective program for improvement of instruction involves five items: (1) a liberal allowance of time for observing teachers at work, (2) a detailed knowledge of what constitutes good teaching, (3) a technique of supervision, (4) a spirit of co-operation between supervisor and teachers, based on a recognition of the value of such a program, and (5) a testing of results.

To secure the necessary time, the principal should make a survey of the varied tasks that enter into the management of the school, with careful consideration of their relative importance and of the most effective methods of performing them. He should decide which tasks he may best perform himself and which should be delegated to others. Before he can secure any substantial relief from routine, he must first educate his immediate staff, the superintendent, and the board of education. The members of his staff will not willingly accept additions to their already heavy schedules unless they are convinced that gains are to be secured in which they will ultimately share. In fact, there is grave danger that by assigning to teachers tasks not directly related to the work of the classroom, the actual effectiveness of teaching may be diminished. It should be possible to reduce the teaching schedule of those who are asked to perform regular duties of administration. Many tasks would be better done by skilled clerks. In schools with a registration of four hundred or more pupils there should be an assistant principal. But before any considerable increase can be made in the teaching or administrative staff, its need must be made apparent to the superintendent and the board of education. In their provision for the administration of the high school, the members of boards of education do not usually display the sagacity which they show in the management of their private business affairs. This is mainly due to their lack of enlightenment. However, it should not be difficult to convince them that it is poor business to pay the salary of a professional expert for the performance of the duties of a clerk. If they can be convinced that they have such an expert, for the sake of economy they will make it possible for him to perform his professional duties, as they would in the case of the managers of their stores or shops. In any given school, the principal must take up the situation as he finds it and begin a program which he will hope to expand as he is able to convince his staff and his superiors of its value. This will require clear insight and resolute determination. The only practical way to escape his present overwhelming program of routine is to make for himself a daily schedule, definite and complete, which he will highly resolve to follow.

The second requisite, a detailed knowledge of what constitutes good teaching, is easier of attainment. It is true in many cases

that the qualifications on which the selection of principals is based have not included such knowledge. The condition in this respect is improving rapidly by reason of the growing insistence on professional training and the consequent increase in attendance on professional schools, particularly during the summer sessions. It is not necessary that the principal have expert knowledge of the materials of instruction in the various subjects, but he should be well trained in the general methods that apply to all instruction and in the adaptation of these to the special methods that apply to the different subjects of the curriculum. He should thus be able to substitute for the general-impression method of judging a teacher's work an estimate based on detailed evaluation of the methods of teaching and the results secured.

The third requisite, a technique of supervision, is the most important and the most difficult. We have for a long time been training supervisors of special subjects for the elementary school, but only very recently have courses been offered in professional schools for training in supervision of high-school instruction. These courses and the literature which is beginning to appear in the journals and other educational publications give promise of rapid development in this field. The numerous score-cards of Elliott, Boyce, Rugg, and others, while intended primarily for another purpose, probably have been most valuable in their analysis of the detailed qualities of merit in teaching and the opportunity which they offer to teachers for self-analysis. It has been pointed out that they fail to rate the effectiveness of teaching because of their emphasis on qualities of teaching rather than on the results of teaching. Some such detailed analysis of the teaching process, in the hands of both the supervisor and the teachers, is a necessary part of the technique of supervision.

In order to secure the largest results, the principal must have a definite plan of action. It is essential that he spend much time in the classroom, visiting the teachers not once but many times, not for a few minutes but for entire periods. It may be best for him to give the most attention to the new and least experienced teachers. They are likely to be most immediately responsive. He may decide to give his attention at one time to the work of a single year or of a single subject. In any case, it is wise not to attempt too much at

once, but to concentrate on some particular group or on a single phase of teaching. It is a good plan to take up for a time classroom management, or some topic of technique like questioning or problem-solving, thus giving attention to some particular phase of the teaching process until general and permanent improvement has been secured in the whole classroom procedure.

The follow-up of classroom observation is most important. It is well to follow each visit with an interview in which the excellencies and defects of the recitation are discussed in a direct and sympathetic manner. Here the principal should aim to give encouragement and constructive suggestions. Harsh criticism and dogmatic directions are seldom to be employed, for the principal's aim is to secure the improvement of the teachers as he finds them. In addition to the personal interviews, group discussions and faculty meetings play an important part. Such an outline as is given in this article may well be made the basis of a series of faculty meetings running through an entire year, in which the various subjects may be made to parallel the points of emphasis in supervision from week to week.

The previous paragraph has anticipated the fourth requisite of the program for improving instruction, the securing of a spirit of co-operation on the part of the members of the teaching staff. Any misapprehension or suspicion as to the purpose of supervision will soon be removed when teachers are convinced that the principal sincerely desires to help them improve and is not concerned primarily with determining their fitness for promotion or discharge. He must avoid giving the impression that he regards a single observation as sufficient for determining the quality of a teacher's work. He should not fail to note and express approval of specific evidences of improvement. Through individual and group conferences he should patiently seek to improve the professional attitude and teaching skill of the staff, especially recognizing evidences of initiative or special effort on the part of individuals. He should make available any helpful material which he finds in his reading and should encourage his teachers to read widely in their special fields. Especially should he encourage individual teachers and departments to try new materials of instruction or teaching devices; he should

co-operate in every possible way in developing an experimental attitude in the staff. Such a program of supervision cannot fail to secure an enthusiastic response and will cause petty jealousies or complacent satisfaction with mediocre attainment to be replaced with real professional zeal.

The last, but by no means the least important, part of a program for improving instruction is the testing of results. If supervision results in the improvement of instruction, the amount of improvement can be measured. It is not sufficient to draw subjective conclusions as to the results of supervision; valid conclusions can be reached only by careful quantitative measurements. Subject-matter tests are available in several subjects of the curriculum, and others are rapidly appearing, which, when standardized by use, will furnish reliable instruments for measuring school products. Careful records of achievement should be made at stated intervals for comparison of pupils' progress and of the work of different teachers and departments. Changes in subject-matter organization or in methods of instruction should thus be compared to determine their relative effectiveness. The principal should realize that his success as a supervisor can be shown only by the carefully measured results of the instruction in his school.

The accompanying checking list for the supervision of instruction has grown out of a course given by the author in Teachers College. It attempts to enumerate the most important elements of good classroom management, of the selection and arrangement of subject-matter, and of the technique of teaching. Critical readers may note the omission of items which they think should be included; others may think it is too detailed or that proper balance has not been maintained in its organization. It is submitted as the sort of analysis which will prove helpful both to the supervisor and to the teachers whose improvement is desired. It should be observed that this checking list does not undertake to determine the relative importance of the several items enumerated or to provide for the definite rating of the teacher. Its purpose is simply to aid supervising officers and teachers by giving a detailed analysis of the elements of good teaching as a basis for individual reflection and group discussion. In order to give greater objectiveness to the various

CHECKING LIST FOR SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

Teacher _____ Date _____

Subject _____

Check in one of the five columns, E-A. If a sufficient number of teachers are observed (say 50), approximately 10 per cent should be checked E and A, 20 per cent D and B, and 40 per cent C. If the feature does not appear, check in Column "No."

I. Classroom Management	No	E	D	C	B	A	Remarks
1. Was proper attention given to lighting, temperature, ventilation?							
2. Was the equipment of the rooms—e.g., desks, blackboards, etc.—in good order?							
3. Was there sufficient supplementary material, e.g., maps, books, etc.?							
4. Were supplementary materials effectively arranged?							
5. Was the teacher physically well qualified?							
6. Was the teacher's voice pleasing and enunciation clear?							
7. Was the teacher's dress suitable?							
8. Were the teacher's manners suitable?							
9. Did the teacher use correct English?							
10. Did the teacher show evidence of possession of the following qualities in a desirable degree:							
a) Self-control							
b) Tact							
c) Decisiveness							
d) Enthusiasm							
e) Resourcefulness							
f) Sympathy							
g) Fair-mindedness							

I. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

STANDARDS

Effective classroom management is based on the assumption that the most important activity of the teacher is teaching; of the pupil, learning; and that whatever interferes with these activities is to be avoided as waste.

1. Light should come from the left side of the pupil. There should be easily adjustable window shades. Artificial light should be available whenever needed. Suitable ventilation should be provided for. The temperature should be maintained at 68-70 degrees with humidity at about 50 per cent. The teacher is responsible for securing the most favorable conditions which the facilities provided make possible.

2. Teacher's and pupils' desks should be kept neat and orderly. Troughs for chalk and blackboards should be kept clean.

3. Classrooms should be provided with usable materials for illustration, demonstration, or application in the various subjects of instruction.

4. Maps, books, exhibits, laboratory material, etc., should be arranged attractively and conveniently for use when needed.

5. Strong physique and good health are essential to continuous success in teaching.

6. A pleasing, well-modulated voice and clear enunciation are important qualifications for teaching.

7. Appropriate dress is such as attracts no attention to itself.

8. The teacher's manners should conform to the best social standards.

9. The teacher's speech should conform to the standards of grammar and good usage.

10. Among the qualities desirable in teachers, the following are important:

a) Self-control, the ability to maintain a well-balanced poise at all times.

b) Tact, the ability to handle all sorts and conditions of people with skill and discernment.

c) Decisiveness, the ability to make a decision promptly and stick to it.

d) Enthusiasm, an invaluable tonic for both teacher and pupils.

e) Resourcefulness, the ability to turn an unexpected situation to good use.

f) Sympathy, the ability to understand and appreciate the point of view of another person.

g) Fair-mindedness, the ability to think impersonally and to act justly.

11. The recitation should begin and end on time. Business-like procedure saves time and imparts good tone to the recitation.

12. Attendance should be taken quietly and with dispatch by the teacher or a monitor. A seating plot of the class facilitates this. There should never be an oral roll call after the first day.

items, the accompanying set of standards has been drawn up, the numbers corresponding to those of the checking list.

The material is the result of a classroom project to which the various members of the class, all experienced teachers, made their individual contributions. After long and detailed discussion it was thoroughly tested in tentative form. The entire group observed several actual recitations of high-school classes, using convenient portions of the scale. After some facility had thus been secured, the entire checking list was used in the case of a single class recitation, and individual scorings were made and preserved. Following this group observation, each student made ten individual observations and records; then a second group observation was made, and the results were compared with the first. It was found that the time required for recording the results of the observation was greatly diminished and that there was a marked gain in uniformity between the scores of the separate items. The material was then thoroughly revised in its present form on the basis of its repeated use.

For the sake of economy of space in this article only one page is here reproduced in the form used in the complete checking list. The remainder of the material is printed without the vertical checking columns. The standards in each section follow the questions, each question and the accompanying standard being designated by the same number.

I. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT—(*continued*)

11. Did the class work begin and end on time?
12. Was attendance taken economically?
13. Were laboratory, shop, or other materials effectively handled?
14. Was provision made for seating of pupils with defective sight or hearing or other physical differences?
15. Did the pupils enter, leave, and move about the room in an appropriate manner?
16. Was the posture of the pupils good?
17. Did the work of the class proceed smoothly and sequentially?
18. Were the pupils' responses well directed and well expressed?
19. Was the attention of the entire class keen and continuous?
20. Did good order inhere in the situation without apparent compulsion?
21. Was the group characterized by an attitude of courtesy and co-operation toward all of its members?

STANDARDS

13. Laboratory and shop materials should be stored, distributed, and accounted for in such a way as to avoid waste and to make them available when and where needed. The distribution and collection of papers and other material should take as little time as possible and cause the least possible disturbance to the orderly progress of class work.

14. Pupils with defective sight or hearing should be placed so as to relieve the defect as far as possible. Any other special cases should receive appropriate attention.

15. Pupils should enter and leave the room in an orderly and natural manner. Moving about the room or to the blackboard should be without confusion or disturbance.

16. Pupils should sit without slouching in an attitude conducive to attention; when standing they should not lean on the desks.

17. The work of the class should proceed without interruption, one step following another in orderly sequence.

18. Pupils should address the group, not the teacher only, when speaking, with clear enunciation and loud enough for all to hear.

19. The attention of the class to the work in hand should be keen and sustained throughout the period.

20. There should be no apparent effort on the part of the teacher to maintain discipline. In case individuals need attention, the skilful teacher handles the situation with a maximum of effect on the individual.

21. In their interaction toward individuals and the entire group, teachers and pupils alike should exhibit courtesy and a desire to co-operate at all times.

II. SELECTION AND ARRANGEMENT OF SUBJECT-MATTER

1. Was the subject-matter related to the social needs of the pupils?

2. Was it adapted to the abilities of the group?

3. Was the material arranged with regard to the relative importance of the different topics?

4. Was effective use made of materials from other sources than the textbook?

STANDARDS

1. The subject-matter of instruction should have relation to the social needs of the pupils.

2. It should be adapted to the capacities of the particular group under instruction.

3. In the selection and arrangement of material regard should be had for the relative values of different parts or topics. Not everything within a given subject is of equal importance.

4. The textbook should be supplemented by material from other books and periodicals and from the experience of teachers and pupils.

III. THE RECITATION

A. *Aim*

1. Did the teacher have a clear and worthy aim for the lesson?
2. Was the lesson well planned to secure this?
3. Was the teacher resourceful in adapting unexpected developments to her plan?
4. Was the aim attained?

STANDARDS

1. For every lesson the teacher should have a clear, definite, and worthwhile aim which should be recognized by the pupils.
2. Each lesson should be carefully planned to secure the aim set up.
3. In the progress of the recitation many things may come up that were not anticipated. The resourceful teacher shows good judgment in deciding what to follow up as worth while and what to pass by as irrelevant to the lesson plan.
4. The effective teacher finishes the period with the aim of the lesson accomplished.

B. *Divisions of the Recitation*

1. Was the time effectively divided between (1) testing and drill on the previous assignment, (2) the assignment of new material, (3) directed work or study on the new assignment?
2. Was the work on the previous assignment mastered by the group?
3. Was the new assignment clear and definite; was the assignment well motivated?
4. Did the assignment grow naturally out of the previous work?
5. Did the assignment involve activity of the group?
6. Did the assignment include helpful suggestions as to methods of study?
7. If the assignment was followed by directed study, were pupils able to apply the assignment successfully?
8. Did the teacher give effective assistance to individual pupils in the directed study?

STANDARDS

1. There are three important phases of the recitation, not all of which necessarily appear in a single recitation period: (a) the recitation on the previous assignment, the purpose of which is to test the mastery of the assignment and to fix the principles involved through practice; (b) the assignment, the purpose of which is to prepare the class for the next step in the progress of the work; (c) directed study, providing for the immediate application of the assignment.
2. If the new material has been developed properly in the assignment, the class should show a mastery of the work assigned.
3. The new assignment should be clearly and definitely stated. It may be given orally or on mimeographed sheets or be written on the blackboard. It is important that the pupils make a record of the specific requirements.

4. The new assignment should grow naturally out of the work already done.
5. If the assignment involves the development of new material, it is made more interesting and effective by securing the activity of the group in its development.
6. The teacher should give much thought to the best ways of learning and should give helpful suggestions to pupils on how to study. To be really helpful, these suggestions must be specific.
7. The test of a good assignment is the ability of the group to take up the preparation of the assignment successfully.
8. In directed or supervised study the teacher should aim to give assistance in such a way as to increase the pupil's ability to work independently.

C. *Teaching Devices*

1. Were all pupils kept busy throughout the entire period?
2. Was there proper balance between teacher-activity and pupil-activity?
3. Was emphasis placed on the formation of proper habits rather than on the acquisition of facts?
4. Was the proper amount of drill given to secure mastery of necessary skills and facts?
5. Was drill interesting and participated in by all?
6. Was the number of questions asked during the period such as would give the best results?
7. Were questions well distributed among the members of the group?
8. Did the pupils ask questions?
9. Were questions correct in technique ("yes" or "no" questions, repeating questions or answers, addressing questions to group, etc.)?
10. Were questions well expressed?
11. Was sufficient emphasis given to questions requiring thought in contrast to those requiring only information?
12. Did the pupils show that they had been taught how to attack and solve a problem?
13. Did the questions follow in orderly sequence?
14. Did the pupils show ability to give well developed topical responses to questions requiring such answers?
15. Was laboratory work conducted without waste of time?
16. Was the laboratory work purposeful, i.e., did it involve thinking by pupils instead of merely following directions?

STANDARDS

1. All pupils should be kept busy on some purposeful activity all the time.
2. Teachers are likely to talk too much. Pupil-activity is more important than teacher-activity.
3. The formation of good habits is the most important result that can be secured from teaching. Among desirable habits to be acquired are: having

material ready for work, prompt attack, close attention, and clear definition of problem. To these the teacher can add a great many other desirable habits, for the best means of forming which he should give directions accompanied by drill.

4. Drill should not be given for too long periods. It is more effective if repeated at varying intervals until complete mastery is secured.

5. Drill should be interesting and shared by all. Various devices, such as flash cards, timed practice exercises, concert work, etc., add zest and variety.

6. The number of questions suitable to a given recitation depends on various factors; the nature of the subject, the aim of the lesson, the age of the pupils, etc. The criterion in a given instance must be based on the principle that the object of questioning is to secure the largest possible amount of purposeful activity on the part of the pupils.

7. Questions should be distributed in such a way as to secure the continuous attention of all and to equalize the opportunity for participation. The varying abilities of pupils should lead to differences, not in the number of questions, but in the character of the questions given to each.

8. Genuine interest is indicated by spontaneous questions from the pupils.

9. Good questioning technique excludes "yes" or "no" questions unless followed by "why," leading questions, repetition of questions or pupils' answers.

10. Questions should be clearly expressed in good English so as to be understood without explanation or amendment.

11. Questions calling for information are of value in testing and drill and for the purpose of assembling pertinent facts in the development of new material. Effective teaching includes many questions which demand thought in the solution of problems based on the application of principles and facts already acquired.

12. The principal elements in the solution of a problem are: (a) defining the problem and keeping it clearly in mind; (b) recalling related ideas, analysis of the situation, and application of principles which apply; (c) evaluation by suspending judgment, selecting and rejecting suggestions, and verifying conclusions; (d) systematic organization of material.

13. The questions should bear an obvious relation to each other and should follow in orderly sequence.

14. Pupils should develop the ability and be given the opportunity to make extended, well organized answers without suggestions or interruptions.

15. Laboratory work should be conducted without waste of time by the group or by individuals. It is not always necessary that every experiment be performed by all. Demonstration by the teacher or by individual pupils is often better.

16. Laboratory work should emphasize the solution of problems rather than the following of directions.